

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2371

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 893

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, KS

SUBJ: ARREST OF WRITERS

REF SEOUL 0078

BEGIN SUMMARY: ROKG ANNOUNCED ARREST OF FIVE SPY SUSPECTS INCLUDING TWO SIGNERS OF JAN 7 WRITERS' DECLARATION FOR CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION. END SUMMARY.

1. SEOUL DISTRICT PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE FEB 5 ANNOUNCED JAN 26 ARREST OF TWO NOVELISTS AND THREE COLLYXE INSTRUCTORS ON CHARGES OF ESPIONAGE AND ANTI-COMMUNIST LAW VIOLATIONS. PERSONS ARRESTED INCLUDED WRITERS YI HO-CHOL AND CHONG IL-PYONG, KYONGHEE UNIVERSITY KOREAN LITERATURE PROFESSOR KIM U-CHONG, AND KOREAN LITERATURE INSTRUCTORS YIM HON-YONG OF CHUNGANG UNIVERSITY AND CHANG PYONG-HUI OF KONKUK UNIVERSITY. WRITER YI IS WELL-KNOWN LITERARY FIGURE. OTHERS ARE LESS WIDELY KNOWN.

2. ANNOUNCEMENT CLAIMED THAT GOVT HAD "SMASHED A LITERARY AND INTELLECTUAL SPY RING." THOSE ARRESTED WERE ACCUSED OF ACCEPTING FUNDS AND INSTRUCTIONS FROM KIM KI-SHIM, DESCRIBED AS NORTH KOREAN AGENT IN JAPAN, CONFIDENTIAL

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MEMBER OF MINDAN AND PUBLISHER OF HANYANG (KANYO) LITERARY

MAGAZINE IN JAPAN. THEIR ALLEGED MISSION WAS TO "AGITATE THE MASSES THROUGH LITERARY WORKS DESCRIBING IRRATIONALITIES AND CONTRADICTIONS IN SOUTH KOREAN SOCIETY," TO AGITATE AND MOBILIZE STUDENTS, AND TO ALIENATE SOUTH KOREAN MASSES FROM THEIR GOVT.

3. FIRST ALLEGED CONTACT BETWEEN DEFENDANTS AND KIM KI-SHIM WAS AUG 1971 WHEN WRITER CHONG IL-PYONG SUBMITTED AN ARTICLE DESCRIBING "WRETCHED LIFE" OF ROK FISHERMEN FOR PUBLICATION IN HANYANG MAGAZINE. SUBSEQUENTLY, YIM HON-YONG VISITED TOKYO IN JAN 1972 ACCOMPANIED BY FORMER OPPOSITION NATIONAL ASSEMBLYMAN KIM SANG-HYON AND YI HO-CHOL WENT TO TOKYO IN NOV 1972 FOR A MEETING OF THE PEN INTERNATIONAL WRITERS' ASSOCIATION. ON THESE OCCASIONS THEY ALLEGEDLY MET KIM KI-SHIM AND RECEIVED FUNDS AND INSTRUCTIONS.

4. BILL OF PARTICULARS AGAINST YI NOTED THAT HE HAD SIGNED PETITION FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT AND WAS ONE OF ORGANIZERS OF SIMILAR DECLARATION SIGNED BY 61 WRITERS ON JAN 7. ALSO SAID YI HAD ATTACKED GOVT IN AN ARTICLE ABOUT THE SUICIDE OF GARMENT WORKER CHON TAE-IL PUBLISHED IN HANKUK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY NEWSPAPER AND QUOTED YI AS SAYING ON CHRISTIAN RADIO (CBS) DURING DISCUSSION PROGRAM THAT "PROFESSORS ARE AS CORRUPT AS THE PRESENT RULING CLASS." CHARGES AGAINST YIM NOTED THAT HE, TOO, HAD SIGNED WRITERS' DECLARATION.

5. COMMENT: WE HAVE NO INDEPENDENT INFORMATION ON WRITERS' ALLEGED TIES TO NORTH KOREAN AGENT. HOWEVER, INITIAL REACTIONS OF EMBASSY CONTACTS, PREDICTABLY, TEND TO VIEW GOVT CHARGES AGAINST WRITERS AS MANEUVER TO DISCREDIT AND INTIMIDATE ANTI-GOVT PROTEST MOVEMENT.
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